

NOVEMBER

VENGE VINEYARDS & WINERY



Fast & Furious

Enthusiasm is alive and well here at Venge Vineyards as we round the corner on a stellar 2021 vintage. What a breath of fresh air this fall has been for us where we had to juggle multiple picks of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Zinfandel, Merlot, and Cabernet Sauvignon nearly all at once. Fast and furious was the theme for harvest as it was the earliest start on record that I have ever experienced. Trust me when I say that me and our team are not complaining one bit. In fact, to use a grape growing metaphor, we are ripe with joy! Never have we witnessed the giddy euphoria taking hold as the hours dragged on. With each bin of grapes stacking up on the crush pad, each bin became a beacon of hope knowing that our winery will live to rejoice another day! In fact, our GM, Jason Williams, generally pumps the breaks when the spending begins to build up. His motto for this year, “Bring it!” In the midst of all of this joy, there is one item to address when it comes to the 2021 vintage: Water.

As those of you that reside in the Western half of our country know, drought has been devastating water supplies across the region. It seems like everywhere we look, lakes are shrinking dramatically, rivers are running at their lowest levels in history, and cities across California are rationing use. Here in Napa Valley, we are looking at a major blessing in the face of water shortfalls: The highest quality crop not witnessed in years. I know, I put a lot of eggs in the basket of vintage 2018. However, friends, brace yourself for some delicious, superior quality wines coming from 2021. Across the board—from Chardonnay through to Cabernet Sauvignon—we are looking at magnificent concentrations of color and flavor that forecast a stellar vintage to come.

There is something magical that happens to a vineyard when water is scarce. Cluster sets are reduced naturally, grape size shrinks the skin-to-pulp ratio, and energy is driven to protect the crop that is left. We manually thin in all vintages to balance the ratios on the vine; however, it is Mother Nature’s *culling* that always works wonders for producing wines of profound resilience. The only downside in this natural selection scenario is crop yield.

Vintage 2021 will see significant reductions in yield from 30% to 50% less than normal years. For example, our Bone

Ash Vineyard *Old Vine Block*, which produces our vineyard designate Cabernet Sauvignon, yielded 45% less than 2019 (we lost the 2020 vintage of this wine to cinder and smoke, so we have no yield comparison). Where we normally bottle anywhere from 395 to 480 cases of our Bone Ash Cabernet, we can safely say that the production of the 2021 will be cut by more than half. Then in comes the fast and furious theme for the allocation of the 2019 vintage. All wines from this vintage will allocate and sell out faster than ever before, as we will struggle to satisfy everyone on our mailing list. Welcome to the inside track, friends!

Our Fall Allocation features three wines that are sure to move like Jim Brown on a football field! First up is one of my all-time favorites, our 2019 Stagecoach Vineyard “Block 1-4” Syrah. You always know you are drinking among winemakers when the mountain Syrahs start hitting the dinner table. This micro-production beauty’s upfront concentration of ripe fruit is complemented by under-layers of bacon fat, hickory smoke, fresh soil and mushroom nuances that raise the hair on your arms. WOW this is good! Next up is a Calistoga stalwart, our 2019 Kenefick Ranch Vineyard Merlot. I love what the Calistoga AVA does for Merlot, as it thickens up the skins and makes for a concentrated effort many often mistake for Cabernet Sauvignon. Big, bold, chewy and delicious, this is a wonderful rendition you won’t want to miss. Finally, a wine that has my heart through and through, our 2019 Bone Ash Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon from the old-vine section of our Venge Estate vineyard. I knew the moment we barreled this Cabernet down post production that it was going to be something very special and I am certainly not disappointed with the result. The 2019 vintage is a highly concentrated and extracted wine. Jet-black, viscous and loaded with ripe fruit, this wine will put a purple-stained smile on your face!

I thank each of you for your contribution to our winery and our success. Your feedback, friendship, and love of what we do bring great joy to my heart. Let’s raise a glass to our current releases and many future vintages to come!

Kirk P. Venge
Proprietor & Winemaker

2019 Bone Ash Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon, Calistoga Estate, Napa Valley

“This will be the last vintage of these three wines for some time to come, as we lost the 2020 crop from these sources to cinder and smoke. You won’t want to miss your allotment.”

Calistoga’s earliest settlers arrived in the 1840’s, where various field varieties of vineyards were planted to traditional head-trained systems. Indeed, the Frediani Vineyard next door to us still possesses vines that are 80 to 110 years old, a testament to the fortitude and the traditions espoused by those early pioneers. Calistoga is today its own AVA, bearing distinction for its climate, its aspect, and its soils. The soils are what drove the naming of our Calistoga Estate the “Bone Ash Vineyard.” As the season wears

on and the soil dries out, light plumes of volcanic ash will dust up, looking like the ashes of the bones of those early settlers.

Our Calistoga Estate Bone Ash Vineyard is broken into three, distinct sections. Young Vine, Old Vine, and Terraces. It is always from the old vine section of grapes picked where the Bone Ash Vineyard designation is produced. This section is picked nearly three weeks later than both the young vine and terraces sections. That additional hang time makes all the difference in grape composition and quality of fruit. A deep,

nearly impenetrable purple hue leads the way on the nose to blue and blackberries, black currants, fruit preserves and jelly jar notes, followed by a background of French Oak vanillin and rain fresh soil. The palate is polished and sophisticated with currants, sweet cassis, cranberry, blackberry, black cherries, with an acid and tannin balance that is developed and promising. With proper cellaring, this wine will drink pleurably through 2034.

List Price—\$115 | Your Privileged Price—\$103.50

THE THREE BLOCKS OF OUR CALISTOGA ESTATE BONE ASH VINEYARD: **YOUNG VINE** | **TERRACES** | **OLD VINE**



2019 Kenefick Ranch Vineyard Merlot Calistoga Napa Valley

We turn our attention to Calistoga and the famed Kenefick Ranch. This will be the final vineyard designate vintage from the Kenefick Ranch Vineyard as we head south to the Sugarloaf Vineyard.

Harvest took place on October 1st with stellar results. The 2019 vintage marked another normal, non-dramatic vintage with winter rains supplying vineyards with a healthy drink water. The result was a fruit set near normal levels (approximately 20% below the 2018 vintage).

List Price—\$75 | Your Privileged Price—\$67.50

The vineyard at Kenefick Ranch is among one of the oldest, continuously farmed vineyards in the area and sits on an alluvial fan of volcanic ash. Hot days and cool nights define this location where conditions are perfect for ripening Bordeaux varieties.

Our 2019 vintage of Merlot is another powerful testament to the newly established Calistoga AVA.

All of our Bordeaux reds from the 2019 vintage are heavily concentrated, powerful wines not to be missed by the collector and enthusiast alike.

Distinct, gorgeous, and savory are all words that pop into mind with this year's Merlot. A concentrated, dark, red hue clings to the glass drawing one's curiosity as to the deliciousness that awaits. The aromatics are driven with highly perfumed, fresh, ripe blueberry, allspice, black currants, lavender, and a hint of barrel vanillin. The palate is expansive and full-bodied with no pocket of the mouth unfilled or escaping this wine's delicious composition. The flavors expand over the palate presenting a lengthy and gratifying sensation. Drink now through 2031.

2019 Stagecoach Vineyard "Block I-4" Syrah, Napa Valley

This is our ninth bottling from this beautiful vineyard and we sure love what this wine has to offer. This rugged terrain first made history when gentleman bandit Charles Earl Bowles, known as Black Bart, robbed the daily stagecoach that travelled over the hill from St. Helena to Monticello. The hills were planted to vine by early German settlers in the late 1800's and abandoned at the onset of Prohibition, where the ground lay fallow until 1995 when Dr. Jan Krupp purchased the

1,100+ acres that stretches from the southern edge of Pritchard Hill overlooking Oakville to the westernmost regions of the Atlas Peak Appellation. Dr. Krupp recently sold the Stagecoach Vineyard to the Gallo family, where superior growing practices continue. Today, nearly 600 acres are planted to various varieties, with Syrah planted in the highest elevations. Our long-term contract for Syrah is on the I-4 Block, that sits on the highest peak of the vineyard. It is perhaps, if not the most, ideal

area for growing mountain Syrah. The 2019 possesses wonderful dark color that opens the door to an array of black fruit aromatics. Blackberry, cassis, toasted bread and French Oak vanillin fill the glass with flair and purpose. On the palate, dark minerals, tongue swirling acidity, black plum and cherry, and firm tannins, with an exceptionally long finish. A massive wine that will easily age, when stored in proper conditions, through 2029.

List Price—\$68 | Your Privileged Price—\$57.80



HARVEST 2021

With special thanks to Venge's Winemaking Dream Team and our harvest interns who made one of the best vintages at Venge come to life!

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Your Allocation Awaits

Due to very limited production and zealous demand for our wines, we strongly recommend a prompt response should you desire the wines featured in our Fall 2021 Allocation.

Need personal assistance? We are here to serve you!

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